

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO THE FIGHTING POWELLS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, today I pay tribute to Col. Tom Murgatroyd of Sherman, IL, and his extraordinary family.

You may have heard the story of President Abraham Lincoln informing Lydia Bixby of the death of her five sons in defense of the Republic during the Civil War. This is not that story. You may have heard about the five Sullivan brothers who died on board the USS *Juneau* in World War II as they fought for freedom in the Pacific. This is not that story either.

No, Tom Murgatroyd's family does share that uncommon courage that runs in the blood of so many families with veterans, but this story doesn't end in the same way. Like so many great stories, this has the wonderful trait of being true. Tom had seven uncles serving in World War II, and all seven made it back home.

George and Addie Powell had 11 sons and 2 daughters. The family lived on a farm near Hillview, in Greene County, IL. In the summer of 1941, Addie wanted a picture of the whole family together. It is always difficult to gather a large family, but that picture was a rare feat and it would become a truly special one. That photo taken on Veterans Day would be the last time they were all together. Though seven of the sons would make it back home from the war, their brother John would succumb to lung cancer while those boys were overseas in 1945.

The sons who enlisted to join the war after Pearl Harbor were Arthur, Earl, Fred, George, Everett, Max, and Adrian Powell. You may be familiar with the service star pins that mothers of active duty servicemembers wore. Addie didn't have a service star pin large enough to include all of her fighting family on a lapel. Her solution was to put two pins with three stars each on the lapel. I assume she adjusted again when her seventh son joined the war. Three of the men were Army Air Corps and the other four enlisted in the Navy. The eldest, Arthur, already had a 20-year Navy career when the war started, and he returned to service as a recruiter. This sense of duty and patriotism extended to the entire Powell family, who all pitched in to help with the war effort. There would have been an eighth Powell enlisting had the war gone on another few years.

The whole family did their part for the war, but I want to focus on Everett for a moment. On March 4, 1944, he was flying his Thunderbolt P-47 on an es-

corting mission with a formation of Flying Fortresses. It was his 90th mission and also his mother's birthday. His plane was shot down over Belgium. He told his fighter group that he would bail out, but he never did. Two weeks later, the family was informed that Everett was missing. His mother Addie had a heart attack upon hearing the news.

Weeks turned to months, and Everett was still missing. Then, on the Fourth of July, the family received a message that Everett was alive and a prisoner of the Germans. The family's prayers were answered. Ruth, sister to the Powell brothers and Col. Tom Murgatroyd's mother, recalled that it was rightfully, "the happiest Fourth of July" in several years. Everett went on to endure 18 months in the German POW camp called Stalag 3. When Everett was released, he wandered until encountering the American lines and then boarded a ship to come home. He said he bought 24 chocolate bars in the ship's store and got so sick he never cared for chocolate afterward.

The family never ceased waiting to hear from their boys. While they were away, their sister Ruth made a banner for the family to represent the seven family members serving, because the military at the time didn't have any banners with more than six stars to represent the number of sons serving from one family.

The sons all wrote letters to their family. Their first questions consistently were about the crops back home before asking about family and friends. When they did return, their mom, Addie, was always waiting down the road to greet her sons.

The Powell family is an extraordinary example of what so many families experience during war. It should not surprise us that several of the Powells would continue their military service after the war. Everett, though being held in a POW camp, went on to have a nearly 30-year Air Force career. Many of the children of the Powell brothers and sisters went on to serve in the military, including Col. Tom Murgatroyd of Sherman, IL. George is the last surviving sibling who had served in World War II, and he is now living in Traverse City, MI.

I hope my colleagues will join me in celebrating the courage of the Powell family. Thank you, and all the families like you, who are doing their part to support our veterans and serving the country.

WORLD WAR II VETERANS VISIT

Mr. WALSH. Mr. President, over the past 2 years, the Big Sky Honor Flight has transported 755 World War II veterans to their memorial in Washington, DC. Before these trips, most of the veterans had never seen the memorial that was built in their honor.

Our World War II veterans sacrificed so much for our country, often deploying for as long as 4 years, and then re-

turned home to build the great country we have today. They truly are the greatest generation.

The Big Sky Honor Flight started out as a powerful idea to honor Montana's veterans, but getting 755 veterans, their caregivers, and medical staff across the country and back is no easy task. Today I want to recognize the selfless servants who made the Big Sky Honor Flight a reality.

The Big Sky Honor Flight Committee works tirelessly on behalf of our veterans. Their mission was to make sure every World War II veteran from Montana had the opportunity to visit our Nation's capital and see how grateful we are for their service. Today, as the ninth and final flight leaves Washington, DC, for Billings, MT, we are proud to say: mission accomplished.

The Big Sky Honor Flight Committee successfully raised \$1.45 million from Montanans to charter nine flights transporting the veterans to Washington, DC. The committee's dedication to bringing the veterans to see their monument was no easy task.

As honorary chair of the Big Sky Honor Flight, I saw firsthand the work that went into identifying our veterans, providing transportation, and coordinating all of the logistics.

As we celebrate the final Big Sky Honor Flight for our World War II veterans I want to pay tribute to the men and women who made the nine flights a reality: the Big Sky Honor Flight Committee.

From the bottom of my heart, I want to say thank you to the Big Sky Honor Flight Committee: Chris Reinhard, George Blackard, Burt Gigoux, Becky Hillier, Bill Kennedy, Denise Licata, Cory Miller, Charlie Reed, Ray Robinson, Tiffany Samel, Annette Satterly, Kathy Shannon, Vicky Stephens, and Tina Vauthier.

Thank you for your hard work and dedication to ensure that Montana's World War II veterans saw their memorial.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING CONCERNS OF POLICE SURVIVORS

• Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the work of Concerns of Police Survivors, C.O.P.S., for 30 years of service to the surviving families of America's fallen law enforcement officers. In 1984, Suzie Sawyer started C.O.P.S. as a small grief support organization of 110 law enforcement survivors in the basement of her Prince George's County, MD, home. Following the retirement of her husband from the Prince George's County Police Department, C.O.P.S. relocated its national headquarters to Camdenton, MO, in 1993, where it has since grown, unfortunately every year, to serve over 30,000 surviving law enforcement families across the country at annual seminars and retreats. With 50 national chapters